

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
MEANING AND EXTENT
OF THE

OATH,

TAKEN AT THE ADMISSION OF EVERY
BURGESS

IN THE
CITY OF EDINBURGH,

AS COMPREHENDING THE DUTIES OF
RELIGION, ALLEGIANCE TO THE KING, RESPECT
AND SUBMISSION TO THE AUTHORITY OF
THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE, AND THE
RELATIVE DUTIES WHICH BUR-
GESSES OWE TO EACH OTHER.

BY THOS. SOMMERS,
BURGESS AND FREEMAN GLAZIER OF EDINBURGH.

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UNTO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THOMAS ELDER

LORD PROVOST OF EDINBURGH

DEAR SIR,

AND THE OTHER HONOURABLE MEMBERS

OF THE CONVENTION OF THE

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

EDINBURGH

My Lord and Gentlemen,

A desire to bring under the more
thorough consideration of
the Convention the important
obligation of every Burgh
and thereby to awaken a
serious import, induced me to devote a few
leisure hours to the subject. Whether I
have been successful in the
discussion of its various and interesting
particulars, is left for your judgment
to determine.



That the observations might prove
of public utility, by calling back every
Brethren who may have in a hasty and
unguarded hour strayed from the path of
duty.

UNTO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,
THOMAS ELDER,
LORD PROVOST OF EDINBURGH,
P R E S E S;
AND THE OTHER HONOURABLE MEMBERS
OF THE CONVENTION OF THE
ROYAL BOROUGHES
OF
SCOTLAND.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

A DESIRE to bring under *review* the more striking features of those solemn and important obligations which are *binding* upon every BURGESS, in consequence of his OATH, and thereby to awaken his *attention* to their *serious* import, induced me to devote a few leisure hours to the subject. Whether I have been successful in the *arrangement* and *discussion* of its various and interesting particulars, is left for your superior judgment to determine.

That the OBSERVATIONS might prove of public utility, by calling back *erring* Brethren, who may have in a *heedless* and *unguarded* hour strayed from the path of
duty,

duty, and that they may operate as a mean of fortifying their minds against *future* deviations, were my primary motives.

Under the influence, therefore, of these sentiments, they are humbly presented to you, in the flattering expectation, that the PATRONAGE which your *elevated, extensive, and important* situations enable you to give, will be granted to their more GENERAL CIRCULATION.

The uncommon *decline* of RELIGIOUS, MORAL, and POLITICAL VIRTUE, which is so *apparent* throughout the Kingdom, is a circumstance truly alarming, and calls for every EXERTION to check its further progress and dangerous consequences.

That these OBSERVATIONS, therefore, on the MEANING and *extent* of the BURGESS OATH, may have, UNDER YOUR PATRONAGE, these happy effects on the minds of my fellow BURGESSES, is the sincere wish of,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most Obedient,

And very Humble Servant,

THOS. SOMMERS.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

MEANING AND EXTENT

OF THE

BURGESS OATH, &c.

As many doubts and difficulties, consequently disputes, have arisen, respecting the meaning and extent of the Oath taken at the admission of every Burgess, I have used the liberty, so far as my judgment and comprehension lead me, and the *literal* import of the words suggest, to give a plain and unambiguous explanation of that Oath; and that, not only for the benefit of those who mean to become Burgesses, but for those also who are, but whose *youth, inattention, or inexperience*, may cause them to err.

Here,

Here, however, I must premise, that, upon the idea that ALL men believe in the existence of a DEITY, whose OMNISCIENCE beholds, and whose OMNIPOTENCE can punish every *deviation* from TRUTH, an appeal to that DEITY, in confirmation of truth, constitutes the ESSENCE of an Oath.

But such is the lapsed state of man, such the degeneracy, nay the depravity of his nature, that however he may resolve and determine to enter upon, and persevere in the road of duty, that resolution may, from a variety of causes, not only be *shaken*, but actually *overturned*. Hence arises the necessity of an Oath, or solemn obligation to preserve his INTEGRITY.

It may also be observed, that, although man is *naturally* a *social* creature, and powerfully inclined to promote, in *connection* with his *own*, the happiness of others; circumstances and situations may *weaken*, may *eradicate* that inclination.

With

With a view, therefore, to guard against deviations from RECTITUDE on the one side, and to punish those deviations when they occur on the other, STATES and COMMUNITIES have wisely imposed OATHS; an adherence to the spirit and letter of which will most effectually preserve the *integrity*, and promote the *safety* and *happiness* of ALL. That the BURGESS Oath has such a tendency, falls now (after reciting the Oath itself) to be considered.

O A T H.

“ Here I protest *before* GOD and your
 “ Lordship (Dean of Gild) that I *profess*
 “ and ALLOW with my HEART the TRUE
 “ RELIGION presently professed within this
 “ Realm, and authorised by the Laws there-
 “ of. I SHALL abide *thereat* and *defend* the
 “ same to my LIFE’S end, RENOUNCING
 “ the ROMAN RELIGION called PAPIST-
 “ RY. I shall be LEIL and TRUE to our
 “ SOVEREIGN

“ SOVEREIGN LORD KING GEORGE
 “ the THIRD and his SUCCESSORS ; to
 “ the PROVOST and *Baillies* of this *Burgh*.
 “ I shall obey the Officers of *this Burgh* ;
 “ fortify, maintain, and defend them in the
 “ execution of their offices with my BODY
 “ and GOODS. I shall not colour unfree-
 “ mens goods under colour of mine own.
 “ I shall not purchase Lordships nor au-
 “ thorities, contrary to the *freedom* of this
 “ *Burgh*. In all *taxations*, *watchings*, and
 “ *wardings*, and all other public burdens to
 “ *be* laid upon *this Burgh*, I shall *willingly*
 “ bear *my* part as I am commanded by the
 “ MAGISTRATES thereof, and shall not
 “ purchase nor use exemptions to be free
 “ thereof, renouncing the benefit of the
 “ same for ever ; and *especially*, I shall not
 “ project nor procure any monopolies, be
 “ partner in any, directly or indirectly.
 “ And finally, I shall not *attempt* nor do
 “ any thing *hurtful* to the LIBERTIES and
 “ *common well* of this *Burgh* ; and, so oft
 “ as I break any part of this my OATH, I
 “ *oblige* to pay to the common affairs there-
 “ of

" of one hundred pounds Scots money,
" and shall remain in ward while payment.
" So HELP ME GOD."

This OATH may be divided into *four* separate and distinct heads, viz.

1. RELIGION.
2. ALLEGIANCE to the KING.
3. RESPECT and SUBMISSION to the
AUTHORITY of the CIVIL MAGI-
STRATE: And,
4. The DUTIES Burgesſes owe to each
other.

We ſhall conſider theſe in their order.

The OATH is very properly introduced with a ſolemn appeal to GOD, and a belief in his OMNISCIENCE. This is implied in the terms *before*, or in *preſence* of GOD. A firm perſuaſion of this great TRUTH forms the baſis of the *obligation* ; and, when the mind is properly informed and duly
impreſſed,

impressed, it is almost impossible that any can commit a breach of it.

Thus prepared, the BURGESS swears, "I protest before GOD," &c. Here *nominal* Christianity alone is not sufficient, we must *allow* and BELIEVE in our HEART the TRUE RELIGION, viz. the PROTESTANT, as ESTABLISHED by LAW in SCOTLAND. It is not enough that we *profess*, but we must so PRACTISE and *abide* by that TRUE RELIGION, as to DEFEND the same even to our LIFE'S END. And, as a farther proof of our *sincerity*, we must *renounce*, or rather *reject*, the ROMAN RELIGION called PAPISTRY, as exhibiting a system of *erroneous* DOCTRINE, not only dangerous to our more important and eternal interest, but as subversive of CIVIL LIBERTY also; for, it is an incontrovertible fact, that, wherever we find *that* system of Religion established, and prevail, CIVIL LIBERTY is less *known* and *enjoyed*. Witness the kingdoms of SPAIN and PORTUGAL, where POPERY with all its *inquisitorial* severity reigns.

The

The TRUE RELIGION is, like its blessed Founder, PEACEFUL, MEEK, and MERCIFUL. It captivates the HEART and AFFECTIONS, softens the manners, and regulates the life, by its *pure, happy, truly INTRINSIC WORTH* and PERSUASIVE PRINCIPLES. It needs only to be KNOWN, in order to its being EMBRACED; and the better it is UNDERSTOOD, our *attachment* to it will be the stronger, and our *charity* towards one another operate accordingly. Those little distinctions which have taken place from the Established Church, are in themselves so *inconsiderable*, as to scarcely justify those heats and jealousies which sometimes appear in the conduct of *Dissenters*, and those of the *establishment* towards each other. TRUE RELIGION condemns such a spirit in both, (*"Ye know not what spirit ye are of,"*) and rather invites to mutual forbearance, upon this idea, that the doctrines taught and believed by both are *essentially the same*. They establish the same great and ONLY foundation of HOPE. They enjoin the same MORAL duties, and propose the same important end, viz. ETERNAL HAPPINESS!

Here

Here I cannot help remarking, that a wise, humane, and virtuous BRITISH Legislature, have recently shown to every BURGESS, nay to every subject, an example of *moderation* truly worthy of *imitation*, by repealing certain *penal* statutes against ROMAN CATHOLICS. However just and prudential those Laws might be at the time when they were first enacted, the same necessity exists not at this period of *moderation*. The ideas of mankind have become more expanded; and the votaries of that Religion have, from BRITISH indulgence, in a great measure relaxed the muscles of their bigotry. BRITAIN, whose National boast is *Religious* and *Civil* Liberty in their greatest extent, could not fail to make some impresson on their minds. They have accordingly refused to obey the PAPAL AUTHORITY of the see of *Rome*. Many of their Clergy and Laity have qualified to the state, and seem conscious that they live under a mild, just, and equitable Government, and on these accounts entitled to their respect and submission.

“ That

“ That the powers that be are ordained
 “ of God,” we have from the highest au-
 thority. We hope those of that persuasion be-
 lieve in this truth, and will act under its in-
 fluence, and by doing so they will with e-
 qual readiness subscribe, that whenever *Irre-*
ligion prevails, *Anarchy* in the state must be
 the consequence, and that they with their
 fellow subjects will feel its dire effects. A
 state *without* RELIGION, is like the *body*
without the soul; RELIGION animates the
 whole system. Its influence pervades every
 department of the state. It directs the *Le-*
gislation, and conducts ADMINISTRATION
 to virtuous and patriotic measures. It disse-
 minates happiness to *all ranks*. “ It makes
 “ our cities rejoice, and righteousness to
 “ run down their streets as a mighty river.”
 In short, TRUE RELIGION is, “ *love, joy,*
 “ *peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness,*
 “ *faith, meekness, and temperance.*” It is,
 “ to do *justly*, love *mercy*, and walk *humbly*
 “ with our God.” These are the Christian
 virtues enjoined by the GOSPEL, and these
 our duty as taught by the PROPHETS.

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Having

Having thus briefly stated the *first* part of the obligation, which respects RELIGION, I shall next consider what is implied in the *second*, viz.

ALLEGIANCE to the KING.

Here a wide and extensive field of duty opens to our view ; and at no period were those duties which this branch of the OATH enjoin more necessary, and yet less observed.

ALLEGIANCE to the KING, not only implies a high respect, and sacred regard for *his* person, but SUBMISSION to *his* AUTHORITY, as communicated to us through the channel of his Laws, and the sanction of his Parliament. It is not enough that we join with the Multitude, in saying " GOD " SAVE THE KING ! " " LONG LIVE THE " KING ! " Although this is a proper expression

pression of our Loyalty, *we must do more*; we must, at the risk of our own lives and fortunes, *protect* his person. We must check, to the utmost of our power, every attempt to endanger it. We must use every influence of which we are possessed to induce others to a similar conduct.

But ALLEGIANCE to the King stops not here; it does not consist altogether in a respect to his *person*; it implies also an ATTACHMENT to the CONSTITUTION; a term often used, but alas! too little understood. In order, however, to our knowing it better, and of consequence valuing it as we ought, and as settled at the GLORIOUS REVOLUTION, let us look around us, and take a view of the neighbouring nations, examine their various Constitutions *Sacred and Civil*, and in particular that of FRANCE, and then judge, *what Britons ought to be!* Take a review also of the wonderful interpositions of Heaven in our behalf as a Nation, by first emancipating our CHURCH from *Popish error and superstition*, and our STATE
from

from *Despotic Government*, and fixing both upon a *firm, happy, and lasting* foundation. Reflect but for a moment on the price of *blood* and *treasure* paid for those blessings, and then say, whether we ought to exchange them for *French* INFIDELITY, ANARCHY, BLOODSHED and MISERY? From such a *contagion* good Lord deliver us! May God fortify the mind of every Briton against the *infection*, by placing in his view, and in their proper light, those privileges and invaluable blessings which by his *birth-right* he is entitled to enjoy!

Strange, however, to tell, that there are even some who call themselves BRITONS, and yet *approve* of *French principles*! who exult in every temporary advantage which its *sanguinary* CONVENTION and *deluded* SOLDIERY gain over the BRITISH! Nay, they stalk even at noon-day, and retail to their fellow Citizens those advantages, with every circumstance of *exaggerated* triumph! Here, however, they stop not; they repair to their *nocturnal* clubs, and there, with elated

ed countenance and extended voice, wish each other joy ! with *bumpers* to a *continuation* of intelligence *equally agreeable* !

Here I will be bold to say, that if there are any of this description who stand in the character of BURGESSES, they are not only *traitors* to their KING and COUNTRY, but *perjured* in the sight of God !

ALLEGIANCE TO THE KING farther imports, a *respectful conformity* to the laws of the land. As those laws derive their existence and authority from the united wisdom of the Legislature, they become binding on the subject, as the rule or guide of his conduct ; and every breach thereof subjects him to certain penalties and punishments. Those of a *civil* nature may affect his *property*, while those of a CRIMINAL, his *personal* liberty or *life*. They are, however, so mild and generally understood, that every trespass or violation committed against them may be considered as justly deserving the penalty or punishment annexed. In proportion,

proportion, therefore, as those laws are obeyed, property becomes secure, personal liberty and life enjoyed. On the contrary, when *disobedience* to the laws prevail, when popular frenzy and a *Democratic* spirit obtains, *confusion*, *intestine broils*, and *rebellion*, afflict the Nation. *Associations* formed throughout the Island for those diabolical purposes have been justly checked, and those who were most active in the hostile scene punished. To the manly firmness of the *Legislature* and *Administration*, the majesty of the laws, and the vigilance of our judges, we owe under God this *seasonable*, this *miraculous* deliverance.

Is it possible that we can as yet have forgotten two most important periods of our national history, viz. 1715, and 1745, when intestine broil, and actual rebellion, with all their direful consequences, made their appearance in our happy land? And what were those consequences? Where are now many of those great and noble families that once graced and dignified our ancient nation?

Are

Are there not many of them next to oblivion? And what is become of their stately Palaces? Methinks I see the rueful memorials of a magnificent Castle all dismantled and quite demolished! It gives a shading solemnity to the more lively parts of nature's picture; and attempers the rural delight with some touches of alarming dread! *Rebellion*, DESTRUCTIVE *Rebellion*, has snatched the scythe from the hand of time, and hurried on the steps of destiny. Those broken columns and battered walls; those prostrate towers and battlements dashed to the ground, carry evident marks of an *immature* downfall. They were built for *ages*, and for *ages* *might* have stood a defence and accommodation to generations yet unborn, if haply they had escaped the dire assault of hostile rage. Now, alas! nothing but desolation haunts the savage retreat. The ample arches of the bridge, which so often transmitted the wondering passenger along their pencil way, lie buried in the dreary moat. Those relics of the massy portals, naked and abandoned, seem to bemoan their melancholy condition.

condition. No splendid chariots, with their gay retinue, frequent the solitary avenue ; no needy steps, with cheerful expectations, besiege the once bountiful gate, but all is a *miserable, forlorn, hideous* pile of rubbish !

How dreadful then the ravages of CIVIL DISCORD ! Wherever that infernal fury stalks, she marks her steps in *blood*, and leaves opulent cities and magnificent palaces a ruinous heap ! In those days of hostile darkness, how languid to the sight are all the dewy landscapes of *Spring* ? How insipid to the taste are all the delicious flavours of *Autumn* ? When the nation is over-run with armies, and embroiled in slaughter, instead of a calm acquiescence in our portion, our very lives hang in continual suspense !

Such are a few of the many fatal consequences which this nation has experienced from CIVIL DISCORD. Do those then deserve well of their country, who, by their *restless*, SEDITIOUS, nay TREASONABLE practices, have been endeavouring a repetition

tion of them ? Are they induced to act such a part from the present *virtuous* conduct of FRANCE ? Is that nation in such a *happy, prosperous, and tranquil* state, as to become a model for our *imitation* ? Are an *exiled Nobility, a degraded Clergy, a dethroned and MURDERED KING and QUEEN, a captive Prince, a BANISHED RELIGION, and slaughtered thousands*, proofs of that *happy, prosperous, and tranquil* state ? Surely not. All, *all* these things, and many more of which they have been guilty, call aloud to HEAVEN for *merited* punishment, and in its own good time will exhibit them to the world as a monument of its divine vengeance ; and thereby teach this useful and important lesson to surrounding nations, that *infidelity*, as to RELIGION, will *ever* produce ANARCHY in the State, and *certain* DESTRUCTION as a PEOPLE.

How valuable, how important then the blessings of INTERNAL, NATIONAL peace ! Consequently, how *criminal* the conduct of those who would endeavour to deprive us of them ! PEACE, at her leisure, plans and

D

leads

leads out *Industry* to execute all those noble improvements in AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE, ARCHITECTURE, and SCIENCE, which we behold on every side. PEACE sets the mark of *property* on our possessions, and bids *Justice* guarantee them to our enjoyment. PEACE spreads over us the banner of the LAWS, while free from *outrage*, and secure from *injury*, we taste the milk and the honey of our honest toil.

Let *Faction*, then,—let SEDITION,—let TREASON, be ashamed to rear their baneful, guilty heads: May they, from henceforth, with their associate *rapine*, and insatiable purveyor *ambition*, be banished to the lowest regions; branded with everlasting infamy, and bound in adamant chains; there let them gnash their teeth and bite the inevitable curb; while PEACE descending from her *native* Heaven, bids her olives spring amidst the joyful nations; and *Plenty* in league with COMMERCE, scatter blessings from her copious horn; while gladness smiles in every eye, and LOVE, extensive, *universal* love, levelling the partition wall of bigotry,

bigotry, *cements* every *heart* in BROTHERLY affection.

Descend, O descend ! thou celestial visitant PEACE, with thy train of choicest blessings, and make thy stated, thy favourite abode, in our ISLE, that every breast may be animated with thy power, and every *Community*, every INDIVIDUAL, may wear thy resplendent badge ; then shall it be the least ingredient of our public felicity, that the sword of slaughter is beaten into a plough-share, and the once bloody spear into a pruning-hook. It shall be the lowest upon the list of our common blessings, that violence is no more heard in our land, wasting nor destruction within our borders ; our very “ officers will be peace, and our ex-
“ acts righteousness” : Then shall *Commerce* flourish uninterrupted, and *Trade* enrich our Isle : Then shall *faction* and *oppression* blush to appear ; *concord* and *harmony* universally prevail.

We shall now take our leave of this part of the subject, and proceed to consider what is implied, in

RESPECT

RESPECT and SUBMISSION to the AU-
THORITY of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE.

Here, as in the *second* part of the obligation, our *respect* and *submission* must be evidenced by *more* than WORDS ; for, although the department of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE is more *limited*, because more *local* than that of the SOVEREIGN, there is a certain *subordinate* respect which the BURGESS *ought* to pay, and which the MAGISTRATE has a right to demand. And, you will observe, that this respect immediately follows that which is due to the KING: “ *To the PRO-
VOST and BAILIES of this Burgh.*”

What then is the *nature*, and what the *extent* of that respect ? These will be best ascertained when we take a view of the *two* great sources from whence the *authority* flows, viz. Royal Charters corroborated by Parliament, and the free suffrages of *Incor-
porated Burgessees*.

That

That it is one of the Royal prerogatives to grant *Charters* will not be disputed ; and that those *Charters*, corroborated and sanctioned by *Parliament*, give them the force of a *Constitutional* act, will also be admitted. The Incorporated Societies thus established (whether of Merchants or Freemen) are vested with powers to delegate part of their number to form a COUNCIL, and that Council to choose a MAGISTRACY. From these united sources they were accordingly appointed, and by the same means they are still preserved.

Those MAGISTRATES, thus chosen, enter upon duty, whether *judicial* or otherwise, and are entitled, in the execution of that duty, to every mark of RESPECT and SUBMISSION from their fellow *Burgessees*.

The *nature* of that SUBMISSION is expressed by a regard for, and respectful approach to their PERSONS, on *all* occasions, not only when they are in the *immediate* execution of their MAGISTERIAL duty, but in the more private intercourse of *their*
and

and *our* professional business; nay, when we meet them on the *street*, they are entitled to our obeysance and polite attention. Remember they are appointed as the *guardians* of our *municipal* laws and privileges; are to take cognisance of every breach thereof; apply those laws to every transgressor, and *punish* him accordingly *.

In point of EXTENT, the BURGESS is further bound by his OATH, as therein expressed, “To *fortify, maintain, and defend*” them in the EXECUTION of their OFFICES with my BODY and GOODS.” We are upon every occasion to be at their call, to aid their virtuous and patriotic exertions in preserving the PEACE and GOOD ORDER of the City. “In all *Taxations, Watchings,*” and *Wardings*, and all other public burdens

* It has been often, and justly remarked, that there is not a City in Europe, the Government and Police of which are *equal*, far less SUPERIOR to those of the City of EDINBURGH. No sooner are depredations committed than their daring authors are seized and brought to condign punishment. Therefore, there are *fewer* EXECUTIONS for MURDER, ROBBERY, and *Theft*, than in any other City.

"dens to *be* laid upon *this Burgh*, I shall
 "willingly bear *my* part as I am command-
 "ed by the MAGISTRATES thereof," &c.
 He, therefore, who refuses to pay the com-
 mon burdens of the Burgh is *guilty* of a
 breach, not only of *respect* due to the *au-*
thority of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE, but of
 his *Burgefs* OATH. He who evades a *just*
 account of those articles which are *liable* in
 the payment of certain duties is *equally*
 GUILTY. He who "colours *unfreemens*
 "goods in colour of his *own*" is *guilty* of
 PERJURY. He who, by *light* weights, or
false measures, retails the articles of his pro-
 fession, *deceives* and robs the public, and
 sets at nought the *authority* and *regulations*
 of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE. He who
 shall at any time be *aiding* and *assisting* in
 the PUBLICATION or CIRCULATION of
 hand-bills, tending to disaffect his Majesty's
 subjects, or hold up to contempt MAJESTE-
 RIAL AUTHORITY, is highly punishable by
 Law, and has committed a *breach* of his
 BURGESS OATH. He who joins in any *mob*
 or *insurrection*, acts in *contempt* of the *original*
 tenor

tenor of his *apprentice* indenture, and of MAGISTERIAL AUTHORITY, endangers his *own* and his *neighbour's* life and *property*. He who "attempts (*however unsuccessful*) " any thing *hurtful* to the LIBERTIES and " *common weil* of this Burgh," shews he is an *enemy* to its *best* interests, " and given to *change*." He who is regardless, and lives in the *habitual* neglect of the ordinances of RELIGION, and the institutions of public worship, and thereby proves a *stumbling-block* to his *children*, *servants*, and *apprentices*, is an *enemy* to the " *common weil*" of the Burgh; contemns the authority of the *Laws*, and the example of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE. He who despises the *instructions* of the MINISTERS of RELIGION, and refuses his aid for their support, is a *bad* member of Society, and therefore an *enemy* to the " *common weil*" of the Burgh. He who is *deaf* to the calls of the *distressed*, the *poor* and the *needy*, (who in this city are numerous), sets at defiance the Laws of God, the example of the *virtuous*, and the *feelings* of HUMANITY; lives *despised*, and dies *unregretted*.

gretted. In short, the highest *respect* we can pay to the *authority* of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE, is to *reverence* and *obey* the LAWS of the LAND, adhere most scrupulously to the *principles* of RELIGION, the PRACTICE of every *moral, relative, and political* virtue. Acting under *their* influence, we will be induced, and most cheerfully inclined, to *respect* our SUPERIORS, be *affable* to our EQUALS, *condescending, humane,* and *obliging* to our *Inferiors*.

Our City thus powerfully *fortified*, will prove the *constant* residence of the VIRTUOUS; the seat of PEACE, *genuine* LIBERTY, SCIENCE, and TRADE. Our UNIVERSITY, both *externally* and *internally*, will become more and more the *admiration* of Europe; our COURTS of LAW, the pure and undiluted streams of public justice.

Having thus traced (as it were) the outlines of what I understand to be *respect* to the *authority* of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE,

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I shall lastly attempt to delineate, what I apprehend are the duties which

BURGESSES OWE TO EACH OTHER,

Although a rural or *Country* life may in many respects have the preference to that of a *Town*, or *CITY* sphere of *action*, yet the *latter*, to a man of *BUSINESS*, will be considered as the most *agreeable*, because the most *profitable*. Both, however, have their advantages, and both their inconveniences. It is to those placed in the last mentioned situation our observations are to be confined. We mean, therefore, to point out a few of those *reciprocal* duties which *BURGESSES* owe to each other when thus situated.

We shall first view them as *fellow* members of the *same* Society or Incorporation, and then, as they stand connected with the community of *BURGESSES* at large.

As

As *fellow* members of an INCORPORATION, whether of MERCHANTS, or TRADESMEN, it matters not, a spirit of *union* or *concord* is absolutely necessary. Without this, instead of making one another *mutually* HAPPY, they will prove each other's TORMENTOR.

As it is to be presumed, the *general* and *standing* LAWS of every Incorporation, and those *bye* Laws occasionally enacted, were made to operate for the *good* of the *whole*, consequently, for the *interest* of every *individual*, their *authority* should be held sacred and binding, and their great and important objects most assiduously pursued. That a spirit of *union* or *concord*, therefore, is the best and most lasting security they can propose for the obtaining of those objects, it is of the last importance that *union* or *concord* be cultivated and preserved. This is absolutely necessary towards their enjoying every blessing from the Society.

Let us view then some of the wonderful effects of *concord* in various other cases.

It

It supports, protects, and defends the state against the attacks of enemies; for, a state in *concord*, is formidable to surrounding Nations, because it is equally guarded on all sides, and the same principle that actuates any *one* member, actuates the *whole*. Such a state is envied in PEACE, and formidable in WAR. To it, *civil* broils and *intestine* commotions are utter strangers: So that it may be said, to *exist*, and *flourish*, not so much by Military science or the *number* of its soldiers, as by the *unity* and *concord* of its Citizens.

A King of Sparta being asked, Why he did not fortify Sparta with walls and towers, for the better security of the Citizens, and protection of *peace* and *industry*? very properly answered, That the safety of Sparta depended not on the *thickness* of walls, the *height* of towers, or *strength* of FORTIFICATIONS, but on the *unity*, *concord*, and *harmony* that reigned in the *minds* of its inhabitants. And to another asking, Why Sparta had no walls? He, turning to the Citizens mustered in arms that day, said, See, behold the

the walls of Sparta, which, as no Architect can build, so no enemy can level with the ground.—CONCORD is Sparta's defence; nor is Sparta, though destitute of walls, destitute of virtue; for know, stranger, that where CONCORD dwells, there, *there* VIRTUE must exist.

SCIPIO AFRICANUS the Roman General being asked, How it happened, that, after being so often defeated by the *Numantines*, he had at last totally vanquished those victors? answered, CONCORD gave me *victory*, DISCORD *defeat*.

CONCORD is the mother of National greatness, the nurse of *peace*, and concomitant of *plenty*. CONCORD is the *soul* of *conjugal* felicity; it is the golden adamant chain that binds *heart*, *word*, and *sentiment*; it is the strength and bond of Society; as its exertions are *one* and *undivided*, so its *aim*, *point*, and *end* are *one*.

CONCORD inspires and fosters every human virtue, discourages and expels every
bad

bad and vitious habit, and brings forth the *arts* for the happiness and glory of man. CONCORD is the *foundation* of that fair fabric, which rises by *mutual* aid, comes to perfection by *unity* of endeavour, and whose *roof* consists of *harmony*.

By CONCORD a Kingdom is rich in *cities, fields, arts, and sciences*; it begets *faith* and *mutual* confidence, proves an enemy to *distrust, jealousy, and vice*; banishes *discontent* and *partial* views, opens the *heart* to *feel another's woe*, to *partake* of *another's pleasure*.

But the advantages which Society derive from CONCORD will appear in a still more striking point of view, when we contrast them with those *disadvantages* which *naturally* flow from, and are the *offspring* of DISCORD.

The *continual* endeavours of DISCORD, are to *divide, separate, and disjoin* what NATURE has *united*, what *humanity embraces*, and what *universal* HARMONY wishes to make

make one. By DISCORD, *friendship is violated, faith broke, unity destroyed, harmony unbanded, mutual LOVE divided and weakened, and every tie of consanguinity disregarded; the Laws of HOSPITALITY infringed, MERCY denied, JUSTICE withheld, EQUITY neglected.*

Dare I open the annals of the world, What effects of DISCORD! What destroyed Rome? DISCORD. What destroyed *Carthage, Jerusalem, Corinth, Alexandria, Troy,* and every other flourishing state and Society? DISCORD. What produced the present, and indeed every former war, but DISCORDANT *principles, passions, views, and interests?* And what will bring us back again to a *peaceful, happy, and tranquil* state? Nothing but *union of virtuous PRINCIPLES, passions better governed, similarity of views and interests, viz. the HAPPINESS of MANKIND.* Until the contending powers are disposed *thus* to act, WAR, *destructive* WAR, will continue to be *their and our* portion!

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What a blessing then is CONCORD to society ! In order however that *every* member may enjoy *that* blessing, it is necessary that ALL act from the *same principles*, have the *same views* and *interests*, viz. the HAPPINESS of *each other*; consequently the PROSPERITY of the INCORPORATION. With a view, therefore, to preserve *order*, and of course, UNION or CONCORD therein, a Preses or DEACON presides.

This office is of great *antiquity*, and has always been considered as a *respectable* station. This, however, depends, in a great measure, upon the *propriety* with which the duties of it are discharged. His powers are twofold, viz. his sphere of action, so far as respects the *internal* concerns of the INCORPORATION, and, as *their* REPRESENTATIVE in the COUNCIL of the Burgh. By the *former*, he is entitled to order meetings, conduct their proceedings, and, in fact, attend to the most minute circumstances of the Society.

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An *easy, affable, and condescending* MAN-
 NER, will never fail to procure to him the
 favour and esteem of the Incorporation. A
ready and assiduous attention to the *necessities*
 of his *decayed and fallen back-brethren*, with
 an anxious concern for their more comfort-
 able subsistence and accommodation, will
 not only impart to his *own* mind a degree
 of PLEASURE, not to be described, but ad-
 minister to *them* a happiness, which, from
 every other source, they despaired to enjoy.
 Here I could, with pleasure, dwell upon the
 many little acts of *humanity* which he might
 perform, with regard to the WIDOW and
 the FATHERLESS. In order, however, to
 quicken his sensations, let me advise him
 to visit and *revisit* the darksome abode of
 her solitary retreat, and listen to the *cries* of
infant necessity. There, *there*, he will find
 ample scope for the *tendereſt feelings* of his
 soul, and may do honour to *himself*, the In-
 corporation, and the cause of *humanity*, in re-
 lieving them! Let him receive then with plea-
 sure, and announce with joy, the deliverance
 given to petition in their favour, by granting
pecuniary relief to the one, *education, subsist-*
ence, and cloathing, to the other. A DEA-

CON, by his *other* situation, as REPRESENTATIVE of the INCORPORATION in the COUNCIL of the Burgh, has not only a share in the management of its common affairs, but an *immediate elector* for its *Representative* in PARLIAMENT, a trust of great importance indeed, and which was never more HONOURABLY conferred than upon the PRESENT MEMBER; a gentleman, whose uncommon abilities, elevated situation, and public spirit, do HONOUR to his country, but which are far above the pen of the humble author properly to describe.

It is the duty of a DEACON, as a member of the COUNCIL, to *unite* with the MAGISTRATES in every measure which tends to promote the general interests of the COMMUNITY. *Union* in the COUNCIL is as necessary as in the *Incorporation*. One *great* and only object, viz. the *good* of the Burgh, ought to be pursued by ALL; and, here I must remark, that the present MAGISTRACY, by their unwearied attention, active and successful exertions to promote the *improvement, ornament, and revenue* of the City*,

as

* " So remarkable a change (from the year 1763 to 1793) is not perhaps to be equalled in so short a period in any city of Europe, nor in the same city for two cen-

as well as to preserve the *peace, good order, and happiness* thereof, are justly entitled to the CONFIDENCE, consequently to the THANKS, of every BURGESS, nay every INHABITANT.

The MAGISTRATES of EDINBURGH, by their *peculiar* situation, as placed to act in the METROPOLIS of the Kingdom, their duty becomes more complex and arduous, and their discharging that duty a right of greater importance. Their laudable exertions, therefore, although *local* in their extent, should operate by way of example as a spur of action to Magistrates in their different spheres throughout the kingdom, and thereby secure to their respective jurisdictions those blessings of *peace, industry, and good order*, with which the Inhabitants of EDINBURGH are so highly favoured.

While I have endeavoured to point out *some* of the duties which are incumbent on
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turies, taking all the alterations together. When the plans at present in contemplation are completed, Edinburgh will be the most beautiful and picturesque city in the world." See page 6th of MR CREECH'S Statistical account of Edinburgh

a DEACON, in his twofold capacity, I have to add, that unless his *constituents* are equally zealous to perform *theirs*, his situation will be none of the most comfortable. He is therefore entitled, to a *respectful submission*, *candid attention*, and *acquiescence* in every measure he proposes for the *benefit* of the Incorporation. On the contrary, if a *divisive* and *contradictory* spirit prevails, the Society will decline, and its interests suffer. No Society, whose laws are founded even on *virtuous* principles, can prosper while such a disposition obtains. The end of all *virtuous associations* being to promote the HAPPINESS of the *individual*, and to extend that happiness to ALL: And in proportion as these great objects are kept in view, even the NATION itself will, by gradual approaches, become more or less happy. The period of man's existence in this world is but short, (even at the longest), and so strewn with *thorns* in the way, that it becomes the duty of ALL *mutually* to help and *assist* each other.

There are BURGESSES who belong not to any *Incorporated* Society, who, amongst other privileges, are, if NEEDFUL, entitled to have their SONS educated in GEORGE HERIOT'S

HERIOT'S HOSPITAL ; a privilege of great value. For there, they are by their education instructed in the principles of the *English* and *Latin* languages, *writing* and *arithmetic* ; of Religion and early habits of virtue ; and by these means, at a proper period of life, qualified to become apprentices in the various professions of useful industry. The MEMORY of the pious and worthy founder of this noble institution, ought to be *dear* to *every* BURGESS. The numerous blessings which Society have derived from his PRINCELY bounty, have for more than a century past been experienced by the Country in general, and felt by the City of EDINBURGH in particular. They are in number and in magnitude too many, and too great, here to specify. Suffice it then to say, that almost every profession in life is indebted to *this* HOSPITAL for shining characters in their respective branches ; and by the MUNIFICENCE of that GREAT and GOOD man, *have* proved, and *will* prove ornaments in human Society. It is with pleasure I add, that the HOSPITAL at *present* contains *one hundred and ten* boys, who, under the treasurership of MR JAMES JACKSON

SON Merchant, a Gentleman whose *polite, agreeable, and condescending* MANNER, pointedness and accuracy in business, will, it is presumed, FLOURISH and PROSPER. So that, in the *attention* and *abilities* of MR JACKSON, the loss of a *venerable* CARMICHAEL will be amply supplied.

The duties which BURGESSES owe to each other, whether considered as *immediately* connected with *Incorporated* Societies, or with the *community* at large, ought to be such as take place among BRETHREN; and that of FRIENDSHIP may comprehend the WHOLE. Although mankind are engaged in an amazing variety of pursuits, they may *all* UNITE in FRIENDSHIP; it is the most *pleasing, useful, and happiest* tie in human Society. What sweetens life? but FRIENDSHIP. What diverts the cares of time? but FRIENDSHIP. What alleviates pain and makes sorrow smile? but FRIENDSHIP. Men could not exist without Society; even the most Savage have formed themselves into *tribes* and *clans*; although the more civilized part of mankind are united by superior definite and solemn ties,

ties, binding them to *mutual* assistance and support. This becomes a duty, and is besides the *interest* of each *individual*, tending at the same time to the good of the WHOLE. If this *mutual* assistance was suspended or withdrawn, confusion must follow, and in the end destruction to individuals, and subversion of the state.

Under the head of FRIENDSHIP, then, which includes *mutual* assistance, and every other *social* obligation, I comprehend the *whole* duty which BURGESSES owe to each other ; whether as in the limited connection of a body corporate, or in the more extensive sphere of being connected with the COMMUNITY at large. In short, those duties cannot be better comprised or condensed, than into what is expressed and pointed out in the SACRED *admonition*, " DO UNTO OTHERS " AS YOU WISH OTHERS SHOULD DO UNTO " YOU."

Thus I have endeavoured, in as plain and simple language as I possibly could, to explain the MEANING and EXTENT of the BURGESS OATH, as comprehending the practice of RELIGION, ALLEGIANCE to the
KING,

KING, RESPECT *and* SUBMISSION to the
AUTHORITY of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE,
and the DUTIES which BURGESSES owe to
each other.

It now lies with my fellow BURGESSES
to *approve* or *not* of my humble attempt. If
they are disposed to pronounce judgment in
the *affirmative*, I shall be happy in their ap-
probation. If, however, they are of a *dis-*
ferent opinion, I shall be sorry at having in-
curred their displeasure, although I will
have *this* for my comfort, *That my motives*
were pure and disinterested.

The *composition* and *language* may in *both*
respects be *defective*, but the sentiments are
those of *my own* heart, and, as such, I have
communicated them to the public with that
freedom which, as a BRITISH subject, I am
entitled to exercise.

CRITICS may *praise* or *censure*, they
are to me equally the objects of *indifference* ;
I have done *my duty*, *that* is *my* consolation.

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